

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet at 10 a.m. on Thursday, March 20, 1997, in open session, to receive testimony on the fiscal year 1998 budget request for Department of Energy national security programs and review environmental management activities.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be granted permission to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 20, for purposes of conducting a Subcommittee on National Parks, Historic Preservation, and Recreation hearing which is scheduled to begin at 2 p.m. The purpose of this oversight hearing is to address the future of the National Park System and to identify and discuss needs, requirements and innovative programs that will insure the Park Service will continue to meet its many responsibilities well into the next century.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the full Committee on Environment and Public Works be granted permission to meet to consider the nominations of Johnny H. Hayes, nominated by the President to be a member of the board of directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority; Judith M. Espinosa, nominated by the President to be a member of the board of trustees of the Morris K. Udall Scholarship and Excellence in National Environmental Policy Foundation; and D. Michael Rappoport, nominated by the President to be a member of the board of trustees of the Morris K. Udall Scholarship and Excellence in National Environmental Policy Foundation Thursday, March 20, after the first Senate floor vote or at a time to be determined Thursday, March 20, in 406 Dirksen.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, the Finance Committee requests unanimous consent to conduct a hearing on Thursday, March 20, 1997, beginning at 10 a.m. in room 215 Dirksen.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent on behalf of the Governmental Affairs Committee to meet on Thursday, March 20, 1997, at 9:30 a.m. for a hearing on the role of the Department of Commerce in the U.S. trade policy, promotion and regulation, and opportunities for reform and consolidation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. LOTT. The Committee on the Judiciary would request unanimous consent to hold an executive business meeting on Thursday, March 20, 1997, at 10:30 a.m., in room 226 of the Senate Dirksen Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Labor and Human Resources be authorized to meet for a hearing on Higher Education Act reauthorization, during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 20, 1997, at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 20, 1997, beginning at 9:30 a.m. until business is completed, to hold an oversight hearing on the operations and budget of the Congressional Research Service and the Library of Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. LOTT. The Committee on Veterans' Affairs would like to request unanimous consent to hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to receive the legislative presentation of AMVETS, American Ex-Prisoners of War, Veterans of World War I, and the Vietnam Veterans of America. The hearing will be held on March 20, 1997, at 9:30 a.m., in room 345 of the Cannon House Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Financial Institutions of the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 20, 1997, to conduct a hearing to examine the Federal Reserve's proposal to modify the "firewalls" that separate commercial banks and their securities affiliates.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SURFACE TRANSPORTATION AND MERCHANT MARINE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet on Thursday, March 20, 1997, at 9:30 a.m. on ocean shipping reform.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

ROLLOUT OF THE F-22

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, on April 9, 1997, an important milestone will be reached when the Lockheed Martin Corp. rolls out the F-22 in Marietta, GA. The F-22 is a powerful new aircraft that will ensure complete and total air dominance for the United States in the 21st century.

How do you measure success in air superiority. The best measure I know is reflected in the fact that no U.S. soldier has been killed by an enemy aircraft in over 40 years. And that is why the F-22 is critical at this time, for the F-22 ensures that impressive record of protecting our forces continues unbroken.

There are some who fail to understand that the threat to our air forces is growing and that the world remains dangerous despite the end of the cold war. Throughout the world today there are a host of Russian-made surface-to-air missiles readily available on the open market to any nation with the money available to buy them. At the same time, a new generation of tactical fighter is also being produced in Russia and elsewhere which can outperform and defeat our current air superiority fighter, the F-15C. All of these pose significant threats to our ability to maintain air superiority.

The F-22 will ensure that America maintains not just air superiority but air dominance. And as the former Secretary of Defense William Perry once said "everything else we do depends on air dominance."

Mr. President, I am pleased to note that the rollout on April 9 will mark the beginning of a new era for Air Force aviation. As a Texan, I am also proud of the role America's premier tactical fighter complex in Fort Worth, TX played in building this revolutionary aircraft.

I hope my colleagues will take notice of the rollout in a year which marks the 50th anniversary of our Air Force. I also hope my colleagues will take this opportunity to reflect on the importance of our Air Force and the role they have played since their founding 50 years ago in maintaining peace and stability in a dangerous world. The rollout of the F-22 will begin a new chapter in Air Force history and help ensure the Air Force and the country remains strong and capable in the future.

GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

• Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the Greek people on the 176th anniversary of the beginning of their struggle for independence. Since regaining their freedom and reaffirming their commitment to democratic principles, the Greek people have built a modern-day republic that is a strong and positive presence in the Balkans and eastern Mediterranean.

As the only member of the European Union from the region, Greece has played a stabilizing role in the area and helped advance its neighbors' progress toward political and economic security. Greece's own efforts to continue the modernization of its economy and its steadfast defense of democratic governance are critical to the promotion of democracy and stability in neighboring lands.

On March 25, Greece will commemorate the beginning of its quest for independence from four centuries of Ottoman rule. After nearly 10 years of struggle against tremendous odds, the Greek people secured liberty for their homeland and reaffirmed the individual freedoms that are at the heart of their tradition.

From the beginning of their revolution, the Greeks had the support—both material and emotional—from a people who had only recently gained freedom for themselves; the Americans. And since then, our two nations have remained firmly united by shared beliefs in democratic principles and mutual understanding of the sacrifices entailed in establishing a republic.

As a nation whose founders were ardent students of the classics, America has drawn its political convictions from the ancient Greek ideals of liberty and citizenship. And just as we looked to the Greeks for inspiration, Greek patriots looked to the American Revolution for strength in the face of their own adversity.

Since their liberation, the Greek people have never taken their liberty for granted. In both World Wars, Greece never wavered from its commitment to the United States and the other allied nations to resist the forces of totalitarianism. Faced with a Communist uprising after World War II, Greece received support from President Truman and the American people, who helped the Greeks rebuild their war-ravaged nation.

Along with our shared values and traditions, Greece and America share a bond by virtue of those individuals who have remained devoted to the ideals of both countries. The Greek-American community, which maintains an especially close relationship with Greece, also consistently makes significant contributions to American culture, business, and history. Truly, it is a community that enriches our life at home while strengthening our ties abroad.

At this time last year, First Lady Hillary Clinton was in Greece. Her visit was followed by a meeting here in Washington between Greek Prime Minister Kostandinos Simitis and President Clinton, which laid the foundation for even stronger Greek-American relations in the future, and the broadening of existing ties into new arenas.

This year, I was proud to cosponsor Senate Resolution 56, designating March 25, 1997, as "Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy," and

I was gratified to see it approved by the Senate last week. Emotionally and philosophically, Greece has remained near the hearts and minds of Americans since this Nation was founded.

President James Monroe aptly summarized these feelings in 1822, observing: "The mention of Greece fills the mind with the most exalted sentiments and arouses in our bosom the best feelings of which our nature is susceptible." Mr. President, more than inspiration, Greece today has a very important and tangible role to play in the democratic progress of its own region. I have no doubt that Greece is up to the task.●

THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FIRST NUTRITION PROGRAM UNDER THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT

● Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, on Saturday, March 22, our Nation will commemorate the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the national nutrition programs for the elderly under the Older Americans Act. Since their inception, these programs have benefited thousands of our Nation's elderly by providing home-delivered and collective meals to those elderly facing serious challenges and limitations, including economic hardship, physical and health limitations, and rural isolation.

The elderly's ability to obtain meals under the Older Americans Act was originally limited to meal sites, where groups of elderly can congregate for a meal during the day. Following several successful years of service, nutrition programs expanded to serve the homebound elderly. Also, the parameters of the Older Americans Act were extended to allow Area Agencies on Aging to inform the elderly on how to obtain nutrition education, counseling, and screening. Nutritional services have proven to be critical for a significant population of the elderly who can continue to maintain a healthy, independent lifestyle.

Through this program, Vermont's five Area Agencies on Aging contract with various local nutrition service providers to expedite the delivery of meals to people's homes and continue to coordinate meals provided in congregate settings. Federal grants provided for our country's nutrition programs fill resource gaps where non-profit and State organizations cannot.

Twenty-five years following the first meal served in the early 1970's, 242 million meals have been provided to 3.5 million of our Nation's elderly. Since taking office in the House of Representatives in 1975, I am proud to have been a steadfast supporter of these nutrition programs. They are a wonderful example of the Federal Government's successful contribution to improving the lives of our Nation's senior citizens.●

COST OF UNITED STATES INVOLVEMENT IN BOSNIA

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the escalating costs of the United States involvement in Bosnia.

Recently, I asked the administration representatives for a ballpark estimate of the expected cost to the United States taxpayer of the American operation in Bosnia.

I was astonished to hear that administration estimates have been revised to \$6.5 billion.

Six-point-five billion dollars. To put that in perspective, we were originally told that the Bosnia mission would cost the United States taxpayer some \$2 billion. Later, the estimate was revised to \$3 billion. Now, it has risen to a staggering \$6.5 billion.

Mr. President, the cost has now risen more than threefold since the original estimates we were given. That is equal to just over half of the entire foreign operation budget for fiscal 1997 which is about \$12.2 billion.

Let me review what has happened here. In late 1995, when the administration negotiated the United States troop commitment outlined by the Dayton accords, the administration came to the Congress with an estimate for United States troop participation in the NATO Peace Implementation Force in Bosnia, commonly referred to as IFOR. According to information provided to my office by the Office of the Secretary of Defense [OSD], this initial estimate of \$2 billion was generated using a force deployment model based on experience in Desert Storm and Somalia * * * [although] the types of forces, deployment schedules, field conditions, and security situation had not been determined." Once troops were deployed to Bosnia, new information about the field conditions became available and pushed the original estimate up by about 50 percent.

As I understand it, unexpected and adverse weather conditions, including major floods, further complicated the operation—delaying the establishment of land routes and altering placement of planned camp sites. According to the Defense Department, additional reserves were also required to back fill for troops that had been deployed to the region.

Further refinements of the cost estimate were again made in July 1996, when the Defense Department recognized the need for additional moneys—to the tune of almost \$310 million—for pulling out heavy armored forces and replacing them with military police, as well as additional communications requirements. A new total cost estimate of \$3.2 million for operations through the end of 1996—that is, for approximately one full year—was provided to congressional staff in July.

The conditions that led to these refinements also helped throw the time line for the 1-year mission out of whack. So, no one could have really been surprised by the announcement